

Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society



Volume 28

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Fall 2024

REFLECTIONS ON VISITING DECORAH, IOWA



Seminary Students at Saude Lutheran Church

In October 2024, the students from Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary visited sites near Decorah, Iowa associated with the Norwegian Synod.

✓ Humble and gracious are two words that come to mind when I reflect on the tour of Vesterheim Heritage Park in Decorah Iowa. Vesterheim means “western home” in Norwegian. In Heritage Park there are twelve historic buildings that serve as a glimpse of how the Norwegian immigrants first established their “western home” in America. ...



Egge-Korean Cabin

Despite these humble means however the gracious and giving attitude of these Norwegian immigrants should not go without notice. For example Erik and Helene Egge opened up their one room home to the newly arriving pastor and his wife. Ulrik and Elizabeth Koren stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Egge and their two young children for their first year in America, until the congregation could build a parsonage. The Egge house is still there, and is one of the buildings in Vesterheim heritage park. Walking into the Egge house one hears the creaking of the

A DIFFERENT TYPE OF CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

This year's Christmas Open House at the Ottesen Museum will be a little different - in more ways than one.

Usually we focus on one aspect of Christmas, whether it's the Synod's Norwegian heritage, the customs in our missions around the world, or traditions more close to home. This year we'll be looking at presents - the presents of artifact donations that have come in to the museum over the years. Of course, the museum is already full of these "presents" but we're going to highlight some of the artifacts that seem like "white elephant" gifts. These are the things that we're aren't quite sure what they are or why we've been given them. Sometimes they also end up being cherished possessions.

With that in mind, the theme for our Open House this year is "You Gave Me What? Interesting and Unusual Donations to the ELS Ottesen Museum". Along with the chance to see and learn about some of our more unusual artifacts, there will be come-and-go Christmas caroling and, of course, Christmas treats.

Join us Tuesday, December 10, 2024, from 2:30 - 4:30 pm. The Ottesen Museum is located at 4 Browns Court in Mankato.

You Gave Me What?
INTERESTING AND UNUSUAL DONATIONS
TO THE ELS OTTESEN MUSEUM
OTTESEN MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE
Tuesday, December 10, 2024
4 Browns Court, Mankato
2:30 - 5:30 pm
Learn About Some of Our
Unusual Artifacts
Sample Christmas Treats
Join the Christmas Hymn-sing

EDITOR: Timothy Erickson

DESIGN & LAYOUT: Darsie Stockman

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Marie Aaberg, Julie Faugstad, Craig Ferkenstad, Theodore Gullixson, Michael Lilienthal (President), Cheryl Heiliger, Glenn Obenberger, Neil Shaffer, Andrew Soule.

Check out the Historical Society website - <http://www.els-history.org/>

Oak Leaves welcomes articles of both Synodical and local significance for publication. Articles may be edited for style, clarity, or length to allow for publication. Each issue will be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

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6 Browns Court — Mankato, MN 56001*

HELP US SOLVE A MYSTERY



Do you know this lovely lady? Her name is Clementine and she is a reproduction of another painting. She has been sitting in our collection for quite a while. We have no records of where she came from or who donated her. Can you help us with information about how she was donated to the ELS? Contact us at museum@blc.edu if you know anything about her and help us solve the mystery. Thank you!

The ELS Historical Society depends on the membership/subscription fee to fund our projects and produce Oak Leaves. Even without the annual meeting our work still goes on. If you pay your membership annually, you may send your check to

ELS Historical Society
6 Browns Ct.
Mankato, MN 56001.

gaped floor boards, and is welcomed by the hearth in the center of the room. Two small beds are placed back to back; they take up the entire span of the west wall of the cabin. It is a small and humble home, and the Egges didn't hesitate, but rather welcomed Ulrik and Elizabeth with open arms and shared their home with them. This gracious attitude is apparent upon hearing the history of the early Lutheran immigrants. It is a characteristic that we would all do well to emulate. No matter how humble our means are, we can be willing to act as loving neighbors to people who have even less, trusting in our gracious God for provision. (Arthur Langhorst)

✓ What I learned about ELS history from the Washington Prairie church is the care our forefathers had for our traditions. Standing behind the altar was a majestic altar



piece, carved and crafted from dark wood, whose outline reminded me of a church. Standing upon the altar was an impressive replica of Bertel Thorvaldsen's Christ. To the side was an octagonal pulpit, whose shape is reminiscent of both the baptismal font and the communion chalice. All of this symbology inherited from their Norwegian Lutheran traditions pointed to the source of our eternal comfort—the grace of God through the life and death of Jesus Christ and received by us through the means of grace. This



**Washington Prairie
Lutheran Church**

church's first full-time pastor was the Rev. U.V. Koren, and it felt only fitting that we sang one of his hymns in the sanctuary, Ye Lands to the Lord Make a Jubilant Noise. It is a great comfort to know we still continue on in these traditions, and that to all generations God's truth shall still endure. (Adam Hoeft)

✓ While the Washington Prairie church was

impressive, the cemetery grounds also were well-kept and offered their own testament to the early Norwegian Synod. ... Of special note is an obelisk standing tall near the center of the cemetery revealing the location of the Koren family graves. Each



Grave-site of J.A. Ottesen

member of the Koren family has their own plaque on a different side of the obelisk which describes their life briefly. U.V. Koren's plaque begins with a reference to Holy Scripture: "ΤΕΓΡΑΠΤΑΙ" (Greek for "it is written") revealing how important God's Word



Grave-site of J.A. Ottesen

was to this man. After all, what can be more important than knowing God's Word and His saving truth? As Christ said: "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32). Even though over 110 years separate from when U.V. Koren died until the present, it is remarkable to consider that we share the same unyielding confidence: Christ has freed us from our sins. May the legacy of the old Norwegian Synod, especially its supreme confidence in God's Word, continue to be carried on by the ELS! (Graham Parsons)

✓ It's interesting that you can visit some cemeteries and have no sense of gravitas or significance, as though the cemetery you're visiting is nothing more than an artificial set created for a movie. While other times, you are struck with a sense of profundity and personal importance so powerful it almost feels thick in the air. ... Not knowing what was in store at the Lutheran Cemetery in Decorah, I found myself surprised at the weighty feeling this particular cemetery gave me. There is a particular corner where practically every single name you see is one we've also read about in our Lutheran history classes. The history of American Lutheranism could not be told without the individuals buried here. The list of impactful Lutherans buried there is too long to name, but there is no doubt a visit here is sure to give any Lutheran a sense of historic pride. (Scott Fassett)

✓ Luther College, which was established by the Old Norwegian Synod (1857-1917), is a place full of history and family ties. While touring the campus, I was able to see such buildings as Koren Hall, and Larsen Hall; these buildings were named after Norwegian Synod Fathers U.V. Koren and Laur. Larsen. We also visited the



Pioneer Memorial at Luther College

Pioneer Memorial site, which houses memorial tablets containing the names and locations of the churches that supported the establishment of the college. Many of these churches are still around today, though their names may have changed since the 1860s. Norseland, and Waukon are two such churches that have survived the test of time. We also got to view a wonderful selection of Gausta paintings on campus! (Peter Estrem Jr.)

✓ There was a lot to see in the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum,

but my focus was mostly on the art exhibits. The bits of history we got about rosemaling gave me the impression of Norwegians and Norwegian-Lutherans as folks who are very insistent on beauty. They cover their plates, their chairs, their instruments, and just



Luther College

about everything else in their lives with intricate art of flowers. That much was evident on the first floor, but I didn't really take note of it until the third floor that had a bunch of chairs and rosemaled plates. There were two particularly striking pieces, one of which tinged the edge of the flowers with a deep orange, and the other with gold. Just realizing that they were willing to adorn even something as common as a plate was, in my opinion, a wonderful thing. The same insistence on beauty was evident in the adornment Norwegian-Lutherans prepared for their churches, which consisted, most notably, of altar paintings. (Noah M. Schleusener)

THE CLOSING OF A CHURCH

Somber Evangelical Lutheran Church

On September 8, 2024, Somber Lutheran Church had its last worship service. The members have joined together with Lake Mills Lutheran and Lime Creek Lutheran to form a new congregation called Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. They will meet for worship and church activities at the church building in Lake Mills, Iowa.

The closing service at Somber was emotional for some, but also joyful, since ministry will continue. At Grace Lutheran Church in Lake Mills they will continue to worship, listening to God's Word, praying, singing and receiving the sacraments. Grace has joined with Zion in Thompson, Iowa, and Forest in Forest City, Iowa, to form a three point parish.

For the closing service, Rev. Glenn Smith, the pastor of the Forest, Zion and Grace parish conducted the first part of the liturgy. The order of Vespers was used, page 120 of ELH. It began with the confession of sins and absolution. ELH Hymn 8 "Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation" was sung, followed by the Vespers versicles and Psalm 84. The first lesson was Genesis 28:10-21 in which the time that Jacob saw a ladder that went from earth to heaven and angels were ascending and descending. The Lord was at the top and spoke. Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place. How awesome is this place!" The second lesson was 1 Peter 2:1-10 which tells us that "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone" and "you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people."

After the singing of hymn 211 "Built on the Rock," Rev. Glenn Obenberger, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, preached the sermon based on John 3:22-31. His theme was "In Christ, There is Joy Even in Decreasing." John the Baptist had said about Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." President Obenberger reminded us that, even though the closing

of a church might make us sentimental and nostalgic, it was not necessarily sad because the proclaiming of the Gospel and the receiving of the sacraments would continue with a new organization and in a different, although nearby, place.

After the sermon, the offering was received. It was designated for Scarville Lutheran School. Then the Vespers liturgy continued. The Nunc Dimittis was used as the Canticle.

After the Nunc Dimittis came the Rite for the Decommissioning of a Church Building. A brief history of the congregation was read, and Rev. Peter Faugstad, visitor of circuit number 7 of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, conducted the liturgy for this rite. Members of the church council were handed the furnishings from the chancel and the sacramental vessels and removed them from the church as Bible passages were read.

Galatians 3:27 "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Pastor Glenn Smith passed the baptismal font to one of the church council members, and he carried it out of the chapel.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." The Altar Bible was removed.

Psalm 141:2 "Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Pastor Smith handed the missal stand and altar hymn book to a council member to be removed.

John 12:8-12 "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying: I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." The candles were removed.

1 Corinthians 11:26 "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes." The communion vessels were handed to a council member by Pastor Smith.

Galatians 6:14 "God forbid that I should boast except

in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” And finally the cross was removed.

Then Pastor Faugstad announced, “This church build is closed as a place for divine services, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” The congregation responded, “Amen.”

The Vespers service ended with hymn 212, “Lord Jesus, Thou the Church’s Head.” The Collect was prayed, followed by the Benedicamus and the Benediction with Hymn 593, “On My Heart Imprint Thine Image.” Finally, the bell was rung for the last time in this place.

Afterwards the women of the congregation served a delicious meal, and much visiting and fellowship took place.

The work of the Norwegian Synod in the area east of Lake Mills, Iowa, began with a divine service in the home of Lars L. Loberg in Silver Lake township on July 20, 1858. Silver Lake Lutheran Church was founded in 1859 with C. L. Clausen as the founding pastor. There were about 40 families from Worth and Winnebago counties in Iowa and Freeborn County in Minnesota.

Twice in the 165 year history there were church controversies which split the congregation and caused the faithful Norwegian Synod segment of the congregation to move its location.

A slavery question during and following the Civil War caused a split in the Silver Lake Congregation and the minority with its Pastor, T. A. Torgerson, moved to a new location four miles south of the original Silver Lake location in 1869. They retained the name Silver Lake Congregation. This Synod congregation built a house of worship on the present site of Sion Lutheran Church, in 1873.

The congregation suffered another split when the majority voted to enter the merger of Lutherans in 1917, and the minority, once more, for conscience

reasons, had to withdraw and move its location to its present site. 27 voting members organized the Somber Evangelical Lutheran Church. After its organization in 1918, it joined the ELS in 1919. One member, Levor Levorson, donated a large plot of land as a location for church, school and cemetery.

The name Somher was chosen at this time because of its location in a grove of large shade-giving oak trees. Somber is derived from the French word “somber” which means “shady place,” and was given by Mrs. T. Torgerson

A residence was moved to this location among the oaks and was used as a house of worship. In 1928 the congregation was given a church building that was completely furnished. It was given to them by St. Petri Danish Lutheran Church from near Latimer, Iowa, about 50 miles away. The building was taken apart and moved in sections to the current place of the Somber church. This building burned in the year 2000.

There were two pastors, father and son, who served a total of 74 years, T.A. Torgerson from 1865 to 1906 and A.J. Torgerson from 1906 to 1939.

In 1905 the congregation organized a Christian Day School with four pupils that met in the basement of the parsonage of Pastor Torgerson. Helene Bosheim was the first teacher, in 1909 accommodations for two classrooms were provided in the church basement and the enrollment that year was 54. Except for a few years during the depression, the school continued in operation until 1965 when, after 60 years of fruitful history, it closed for lack of students.

In 1966 Somber joined with Lake Mills Lutheran, Lime Creek and First Shell Rock in Northwood to form a four-point parish. This became the “Five-Point Parish of North Iowa” in 1971 when Immanuel Lutheran Church in Riceville called pastor Alf Merseth to serve them. Immanuel closed in 2022.

The Somber congregation thanks the Lord for its history, that it was blessed with the hearing of God’s

Word and the reception of the Sacraments for so many years, and that it was able to serve as a blessing to so many others in the United States and around the world through the work of the Synod. It is also thankful that the members will continue to be served as Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.



FIDEL CONVERCIO

Early in September of 2024 we received word of the death of Pastor Fidel Convercio in Peru. Pastor Convercio had served as the pastor of our churches in the Andes Mountains of Peru for over 50 years, first as a volunteer and later as an ordained pastor. He had come into contact with our mission through the work of missionary James Olsen. He worked for almost 20 years as a volunteer to pastor the mountain congregations. While serving, he studied with the missionaries. Eventually he was one of those who were chosen to study full-time and receive a scholarship in order to finish his seminary studies. He was ordained in 1992 and then became one of the paid workers in the synod of the church in Peru. He was pastor of our mountain churches until the time of his death.

Pastor Fidel began by serving the congregation that formed in Pacllon his home town. His work then expanded to other mountain villages in the area, Llamac, Pocpa and Chiquian. Pacllon had about 800 people. Chiquian was the big city, about 4,000 people, and the capital of the Bolognesi district of the Ancash province of Peru. I once heard a little boy from Pacllon who had just gotten to Chiquian for the first time. He exclaimed, "Chiquian, the town that never sleeps." Pastor Fidel was faithful in visiting these congregations as well as other villages farther away from Pacllon. He continued his ministry in spite

of its difficulty, often having to travel a full day by horseback or on foot, and even in the face of terrorist attacks and threats to his life.

There were also members who did not live in a village, but were isolated. One of my memories is of accompanying him on a couple of these visits to isolated members, notably at a beautiful lake called Jahuacocha beneath the mountain range called Cordillera Huayhuash where we visited a young man, member of the church, who lived there as a shepherd of sheep. He like the isolation and didn't want to live in a city. We also had some recreational time, going fishing together, caught some mountain trout, which we ate after it was pitch dark. I couldn't see what was in my bowl of fish soup, but later learned that the whole fish was in the soup, eyes, brain and inner parts. I was so hungry after the long day on horseback and work setting up camp that it didn't matter. Later we slept, but the hut was too short for me, so it was difficult to sleep. The next day I took a nap on a big rock that had been warmed by the sun.

Fidel was married to Dora. They had two children Edison and Areli (Areli is a biblical name, one of the sons of Gad, so a grandson of Jacob, great-great grandson of Abraham, Genesis 46:16 and Numbers 26:17). Pastor Fidel had several grandchildren that he loved very much. The grandchild that I became closest to was David, son of Edison and Delilah. He wanted to learn English, so when we traveled in the car, he would point at things out of the window and say what he thought was the English word. He pointed at cows and said, "dog." Any animal that had four legs was a dog to him. He learned by being corrected. In the mountain congregations Fidel and Dora were known for their faithfulness to each other. They almost always went together on their missionary journeys to the mountain villages.

Fidel was a very faithful pastor who taught his people the Gospel in a clear manner. He could do this in two languages, Spanish and Quechua. For many of his members Quechua was their first language, the language of their heart. When missionaries visited and preached in Spanish, Fidel would sometimes explain the message of the sermon in Quechua. The

elderly people, especially, would nod their heads with understanding.

Fidel was also a faithful seminary student, learning well the doctrine, culture and history of the Bible and the Lutheran Church. On one of his visits to Peru ELS President George Orvick had an interview with each of the students in the seminary. President Orvick was impressed when Fidel explained to him the difference between the magisterial and the ministerial (or instrumental) use of reason in theology.

In 1998 Dora and Fidel accompanied me on a trip to the United States. We visited several congregations and attended the 1998 Synod Convention. It was quite an adventure for them. They were impressed with the riches they saw in the United States. But they were also impressed and encouraged with the faithfulness of the people from the church that they met. While in the United States they communicated through interpreters, but also used their musical talents, playing Andean mountain flutes and singing.

Pastor Fidel will be greatly missed in the work of the church in the Andes Mountains of Peru. We ask our readers to pray that God would comfort Dora and the whole family. Also pray for the work in the Andes Mountains, that the Lord would raise up new leaders so that the preaching and teaching of the Gospel will continue among the dear people of God in this region..

A Historic and Fun Trip with Dora and Fidel

In 1998 Dora and Fidel accompanied me on a trip to the United States. We visited several congregations and attended the 1998 Synod Convention. It was quite an adventure for them, and many cultural differences became apparent.

In order to get their visa to visit the United States, I wrote a letter to the Consular officer at the U.S. Embassy. I did this because we had been turned down for a visa for a Peruvian to attend the CELC conference in Puerto Rico. They eventually granted the visa, but it took several trips. After the visa had been turned down twice, I wrote a letter to the Consul

asking for an explanation of the reason why they denied the visa. Not wanting to explain why they turned down the visa, he told me that they would grant it. In the case of Fidel and Dora I wrote a letter to the consulate explaining the case and told them that I did not want it to be denied. Fidel and Dora had to appear in person to get the visa and it was granted to them.

Their first airplane flight was from Lima to Dallas, Texas. When we got to Texas we had to go through immigrations and we were separated. I was out of the sight of Dora and Fidel for a few minutes. When they finally saw me again, Dora said she thought that they were never going to see me again and was so relieved when they saw me on the other side of immigrations.

On our arrival to Minneapolis, we took a shuttle to the motel where someone had left a car for us to use on the trip. In the motel in Bloomington I showed them their room. I pulled down the covers on the bed, showed them how the faucets worked in the bathroom, and took the sanitary strip off of the toilet. When I went to get them in the morning they had made the bed, folded their towels and put the sanitary strip back on the toilet. One of the words of advice that they had been given by their friends back in Peru was, "Leave everything the same as you find it." They were obedient to that advice. In the morning they were astounded by the abundant breakfast, all you can eat, without a guard to keep people off the street from coming in and eating.

After checking into the motel, we took the shuttle to the Mall of America to look around and get something to eat. It was difficult to choose from all the possibilities in food court until Fidel finally said, "Is there someplace that serves something with rice?" a staple for them in Peru. We found rice.

The second day we were in the car driving to Milwaukee. As we drove on interstate 94 in the area of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Dora and Fidel were admiring the luscious green color of the scenery. At one point we passed a herd of cows in the pasture. They had grass "up to their knees." Fidel and Dora remarked that in the United States, "even the cows are rich."

One thing that really impressed them was Walmart. After we stopped at the first one, they would not let me pass one. We stopped at every Walmart that could be seen from the interstate highway between Minneapolis and Milwaukee. Some of their friends had given them a little spending money. I had also given them some. The thing they bought the most of was cameras for taking pictures. Many friends had requested a camera.

In Madison we stayed at the home of dear friends Howard and Ruby Hougan. In the early evening, Howard decided to run to the grocery store. I decided to accompany him, and then Fidel decided to go along, too. When we got back to the house, we wondered how Ruby and Dora would get along without knowing each other's language. We entered the house and heard the sounds of music. Dora had pulled out her Andean flute and started playing. Then Ruby opened the piano to play along. They got along just fine. Music was their common language. As the evening advanced, Dora and Fidel wanted to wash up and go to bed. Howard and Ruby and I kept on with our conversations. After a while, we had not heard any noise, such as water running. We went to check. Fidel and Dora came out of the bathroom fully clothed. They didn't know how to make the water run. We showed them, and they went back to finish their baths.

A highlight of the trip to talk about when they got home was putting their feet in the Mississippi River. Then we visited the congregations at Saude and Jerico in Iowa, where I had served as pastor before going accepting the call to Peru in 1982. The people there were very hospitable.

Fidel and Dora stayed with my parents in Thompson, Iowa. Because my parents didn't have enough beds, I stayed with my grandparents. In the morning Fidel and Dora refused to have breakfast until I showed up. They also got a kick out of the exercise bicycle. The laughed at the bicycle that doesn't go anywhere. I drove them by the building in Forest City where I was born. I stopped so they could get a good look. Finally it hit them, "You were born in jail?" they asked. Sometime between 1950 and 1998, the building had

stopped being a hospital and had been converted into the county jail.

At many points on the trip we stopped at travel information centers for Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota. They picked up many pamphlets and maps (amazing to them, it was all free.) On a later visit to their home in Peru, I noticed that they had used these pamphlets to wallpaper a bedroom in their house.

The major highlight of the whole trip was the Synod Convention. Fidel and Dora communicated with their singing and playing instruments. Their visit with convention goes through interpreters. They were encouraged by seeing the Synod in action at its convention.

Later I mentioned that they might want to visit the United States again to see other areas of the country. Dora said, "No." She wanted to visit the United States again, but she wanted to do the exact same trip over, she enjoyed it so much. For Dora and Fidel and for me, too, there was lots of learning to know each other better, many memories and lots of good humor. We were blessed.



A well-known picture of Fidel and Dora Convecio. Many people think that I, Missionary Erickson, took this picture. I don't know who took the picture, but I know it wasn't me. It was probably taken with one of the cameras they bought at Walmart in the United States.



ACORNS

FROM THE ELS ARCHIVES



Theodore G. Gullixson - Archivist

THE HOLY CROSS

*A Lutheran Paper for a Lutheran Parish
Edited by the pastor [Rev. Erling Ylvisaker]
Published Monthly by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Cross.
Volume III, No. 2 Madison, Wisconsin October 1930*

“The Flock Homeward Bound”

Over my study desk hangs a small picture which I call “Going Home.” A shepherd is leading his sheep over the hill and back to the pen for the night. The peace of twilight broods like mellow music over the countryside.

Can anything tell better the yearning of a Christian for heaven than a flock of sheep homeward bound at evening time?

The flock is a picture of our congregation. There are the old, the grand-parents of stooped shoulders and gray hair, who are the veterans of our ranks.

For a short while they walk at our side to give us advice from their own experiences. For these have drunk life’s cup.

Long before our time they were the trail-blazers who went ahead, and now they pause to encourage us to push on. Their words are like the sweet juice of ripe apples.

There are the middle-aged, the men and women of stout hearts and a strong hand-clasp. These carry most of the burden.

As in pioneer days, the middle-aged walk beside the covered-wagons as life’s caravan moves westward toward the sunset. Their step is sure. Their voice is clear. Their eyes see the vision of the hills.

Whenever the pastor needs help, he thinks first of the middle-aged because they know how to lift.

The young people are like the flowers of spring, always making us feel that there is more of hope than of despair.

They play, they sing, and many of them are looking forward to the day when they can walk beside the covered-wagon and drive the horses.

It is true that they lack experience, but they are progressive, and we need the tonic of the fresh west wind.

As a lover of flowers like to look at a blue violet, so the pastor gets much of his inspiration from the happy young people.

Last come the lambs. The little children dance and skip as the lambs on the farm frolic on the straw stack.

Do you know how the farmer cares for the orphan lamb? He brings the little creature into the kitchen, warms the shivering boy by the cook-stove, gives it milk out of a bottle, and one of the children adopts the darling lamb and calls him “My pet.”

Should we not be just as anxious to care for Christ’s lambs, and give them spiritual milk? In a few years our boys and girls will be the fathers and mothers of our church.

Blessed the shepherd whose lambs are strong-limbed. The flock is homeward bound. Hand in hand go the young and the old, helping each other to reach the pasture where there shall be no sunset, but sunrise all the time.

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